

## Guidelines for Including Employees with Disabilities in your Diversity Plan

### 1. Educate yourself:

- Before moving ahead, study the issue.
- Learn more about people with disabilities. Contact your local Division of Vocational Rehabilitation ([www.dwd.state.wi.us/dvr](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dvr)) and organizations and agencies that serve or represent specific disabilities. They can provide training and disability related literature.
- Talk to people with disabilities in your company and ask for their ideas and input.

### 2. Develop a strategy in your diversity plan to include people with disabilities:

- Analyze where your organization is on the diversity continuum related to people with disabilities.
- Establish a system for education and sensitizing all levels of your work force on the value of hiring people with disabilities.
- If you have a diversity-training program, encourage employees with disabilities to participate.

### 3. Consider the following outreach and recruitment strategies:

- Offer lunch & learn or diversity training series for managers and front line staff in disability awareness and skills training.
- Expand outreach and recruitment to organizations that represent or train people with disabilities.
- Consider a mentoring program for people with disabilities.

- Participate or increase participation in summer internships or similar programs to increase the flow of qualified individuals with disabilities in the “pipeline.”
- When contracting with a retainer or contingency search firm, develop the contract to include qualified people with disabilities in the search. The contract should outline the steps that will be implemented to locate qualified people with disabilities.

### 4. Consider strategies for internal company practices to improve retention and promotion:

- Provide employees with disabilities candid and prompt feedback on their performance.
- When task forces or other special committees are established, include people with disabilities.
- Ensure that internal career development programs encourage employees with disabilities to participate.
- When providing training or other off-site activities, ensure that they are accessible to employees with disabilities.
- Monitor appraisal and total compensation systems so individuals with disabilities are treated equitably.

